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Conservation Commission Minutes, March 9, 2006

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

MARCH 9, 2006

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Timothy Sullivan, David White, William O'Rourke, Ellen Reed, and Judith Hodges of the Commission. Catherine Garnett, of the Commission, was not in attendance. Jon Jalbert, Recreation Director, Leslie Maher of the Park and Recreation Commission were in attendance for the fence at the Arlington Reservoir. Dan Driscoll of DCR, Paul Finger, Charles LeRay, Steve Kaiser, Ellen Mass and John Walker were in attendance for the Alewife path project.

7:30 p.m. - COMMISSION BUSINESS

O'Rourke/Hodges motioned to approve the 1/5/06 minutes with minor edits; motion passed unanimously.

The board discussed plans for the next annual Land Stewards meeting.

7:45 pm – REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY for a fence to control geese at the Arlington Reservoir

The 3 foot high wooden snow fence will be installed along the berm that surrounds the swimming area from May 1 until the end of the swimming season.

The goose control program also includes use of dogs to chase out geese from the beach and swimming area as well as egg adding of nests along the berm, as has been done in the past few years.

White/O'Rourke motioned to approve the proposed work, and while the work is within a resource area that a Notice of Intent filing is not necessary; motion passed unanimously.

8pm – NOTICE OF INTENT for pathway work at the Alewife Reservation

Mr. Stevens reopened the hearing (which was continued from Jan. 5, 2006) by acknowledging the receipt of a submittal from Steve Kaiser which included a cover letter and a copy of the appeal of the Cambridge permit for this work.

Mr. Driscoll began his presentation by addressing the concern regarding the easement by MWRA to the sewer siphon manhole structure. To address the need for future maintenance needs, the pathway entrance has been slightly modified to include a removable center bollard and an access route covered by native grasses but still reinforced with a subgrade gravel bed to handle the load of the maintenance vehicle. The expected frequency of access is on the order of 1 to 2 times per year. This area should receive a less than annual mowing to control the invasion of woody species and to retain the emergent nature of this end of the landscaping plan.

Mr. Driscoll addressed the multiple comments on path width by stating that there were many factors that went into the final decision for the 8 foot width that included need to accommodate occasional bikes along with pedestrians. The apparent width will seem less since the edges of the path will grow in with grass.

Mr. Kaiser stated that he saw the MWRA easement conditions as reasonable. He disagrees with Mr. Driscoll and thinks that the pathway width is something that the Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over.

Mr. Driscoll stated that the appeal in Cambridge was going to be negotiated soon with the appellants and thinks that a resolution is readily at hand.

In regards to the entire Alewife Master Plan, the Bioengineering Group and Carol Johnson Associates have been rehired to do the Greenway project (from Minuteman to Mystic Reservation) and to redo this area with a Phase II, proceeding to construction drawings. They will be coming in soon to hold pre-filing meetings with the Commission.

Carolyn Mieth, Cambridge resident, stopped by just prior to the meeting to make a comment on this project. She asked if the Commission would consider permitting a range of path widths.

White/O'Rourke motioned to approve the project as proposed with amendments including the MWRA easement; motion passed unanimously.

The Commission voted to convene at approximately 10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Corinna Beckwith
Administrator